PRIMARY CARE COVID-19 VACCINE PROGRAM FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Important Resources

1. [Primary Care Practice Preparation for Covid-19 Vaccinations](#): technical and workflow preparation for Covid vaccine administration at primary care practices
2. [Vaccine Communications and Outreach Strategies in Primary Care](#): best practices for messaging, communicating with patients, and addressing hesitancy

Ordering Covid-19 Vaccine in ImmuNet

How do I place a vaccine order in ImmuNet?
See this [document](#) for instructions on how to place a COVID-19 vaccine order in ImmuNet.

Details on ordering
- **Thursday ordering window**: Orders for Covid vaccine in ImmuNet can be placed *only* on Thursdays from 8am-4pm, beginning on Thursday 8/26.
- **Who can order**: Orders may be placed by any of the three contacts listed in your ImmuNet PIN registration (CMO/Responsible Medical Provider, Primary Vaccine Contact and Backup Vaccine Contact).
  - If you need to update one or more of your contacts, please log into ImmuNet and make the change in your profile. Please note: If a change is made to the Primary Delivery Contact, the user's email will need to be verified prior to your office being allowed to order.
- **Ordering Limits**: There is an ordering cap of 140 doses of Moderna and 1,170doses of Pfizer each week.
  - If your practice needs additional doses below or beyond the cap, email mdh.covidvax@maryland.gov with your Covid PIN, number of doses needed, brand of vaccine, and a reason for ordering beyond the cap and they can attempt to accommodate the request.
  - **Vaccine type:** You will be able to order Moderna, Pfizer, or J&J.
    - If you would like to receive a transfer from another site, please email mdh.covidvax@maryland.gov and we will attempt to facilitate a transfer.
  - **No automatic second dose orders**: Any orders placed through direct ImmuNet ordering will *not* place an automatic second dose order. Each ordering provider is responsible for ensuring that you have second doses available. An additional order should be placed prior to you needing second doses, if you do not have enough current inventory to provide second doses.
    - A single shipment/vial can be used for dose 1 or dose 2.

How do I check the status of an order I have placed?

Please see this guide for information on how to check the status of your ImmuNet COVID-19 vaccine order in ImmuNet. Email confirmations of your COVID-19 vaccine order will no longer be sent.

An MDH representative will review and approve all orders. Please make sure that your site is not suspended, has a COVID PIN, and is reporting COVID vaccine administrations. If your order is not approved, a representative will reach out to discuss any issues and next steps.

What if I miss the Thursday ordering window?
If you miss the window to place an order in ImmuNet, contact mdh.covidvax@maryland.gov with your Covid PIN, number of doses needed, and brand of vaccine and the Center for Immunization may place the order for you.

Transferring Covid-19 Vaccine

I cannot order and store the minimum order of Pfizer. How can I receive a transfer?
If you would like to receive a transfer of J&J from another site, please email mdh.covidvax@maryland.gov and we will attempt to facilitate a transfer. There are a number of sites around the state with extra Pfizer so please do reach out if you would like a transfer.

I have vaccines that are close to expiration and I don't think I'll be able to use it all. How do I transfer vaccine to another site?
First, you can check the expiration date of vaccines for a particular lot number here:
- J&J expiration date lookup
- Moderna expiration date lookup

Second, make every effort to vaccinate your patients as they come in for regular appointments, even if this means opening a vial and wasting a number of doses. The CDC asks that providers not miss any opportunities to vaccinate every eligible person who presents, even if it means puncturing a multi-dose vial to administer vaccine without having enough people available to receive each dose. Additionally, it is acceptable to have extra inventory on hand (as long as you are following CDC Storage and Handling Guidelines) to use for patients as they come in for regular appointments.

Practices with available COVID-19 vaccine doses can advertise these available doses on the PROPs Provider Portal. Once in the portal, providers can navigate to the transfer marketplace, then select, "List Doses for Transfer." At this point, you may need to complete the inventory survey if you have not previously done so. Once that inventory survey is completed, you may be able to list your advertisement for excess vaccine supplies. The portal will also prompt you to review the CDC Redistribution Form. You will then be directed to fill out the advertisement information and then submit that information. The Center for Immunization will then review your submission and once approved, your listing will be made publicly available.

Storage and Handling

Please refer to the CDC Storage and Handling Guide for a particular vaccine type for your practice. Reach out to your Practice Coach with specific questions about storage and handling.

Wastage

How can I make sure I don't end up with wasted vaccine?
Practices have found having a long standby list can be helpful to make sure no doses are wasted. Additionally, as patients come in for regular appointments, you can ask them about their vaccination status and inform them that you have vaccine available at your practice. Most patients are willing to come back for a vaccine appointment in a couple of days so your practice can schedule patients in bulk. If a patient is not willing to come back for an appointment, do not miss the opportunity to vaccinate, even if it means wasting some vaccine.

Remember that the highest priority is to not miss any opportunity to vaccinate a patient, and *if wastage occurs as a byproduct, that is acceptable*. Practices are not penalized for wastage.

Is there a penalty for wasting vaccine?
No, there is no penalty for wasting vaccine. Please document any wastage here.

Can I transfer vaccines to another facility to avoid wastage?
See the "Transferring Covid-19 Vaccine" section of this document for information about transfers.

What do I do if the vaccine is wasted or vials are providing fewer doses than expected?
If a situation arises where your vaccine vials draw fewer than the intended amount (for example, if a Moderna vial provides 13 instead of 14 doses), you should complete a wastage form. To do so, login to the PROPs Provider Portal. Once in the portal, navigate to the "Inventory Management" tile and select the wastage form. You will then need to fill out all applicable fields in that form and submit the form.

How often do I need to report wastage?
If wastage occurs, it is important to report the wastage the same day that the wastage occurs.

How do I report wastage for Moderna given that booster doses are half doses?
Wastage should be reported only as whole doses. Each dose administered, whether it is a half dose or a full dose, counts against the total possible wastage of 10 doses (for Moderna 10) or 14 doses (for Moderna 14). Once 10 or 14 administrations occur in any combination of dose sizes from a single vial, no wastage should be reported. For a Moderna-14 vial, wastage should only be reported up to 14 doses; do not report wastage over 14 doses even though you can administer up to 20 booster doses from one vial. For a Moderna-10 vial, wastage should only be reported up to 10 doses; do not report wastage over 10 doses even though you can administer up to 20 booster doses from one vial.

General Operational Questions

What are the requirements to become a COVID vaccine administering site?
The requirements for becoming a COVID vaccinating site are as follows:
1. Register in ImmuNet as a COVID-19 vaccine provider and receive a COVID PIN
2. Verify that your practice is reporting data from your EHR to ImmuNet

If these two prerequisites are met for your practice, you may order vaccines directly in ImmuNet. See the "Ordering Covid-19 Vaccine in ImmuNet" section of this document for more information.

I need assistance with the ImmuNet requirements for becoming a Covid vaccinator.
To register in ImmuNet and receive a Covid PIN, see this Registration Guide for step-by-step instructions. Start on page 2 for non-VFC practices and page 5 for VFC practices.

For assistance with setting up reporting from your EHR to ImmuNet, reach out to your Practice Coach who will help you through the process. The process will include working with your EHR vendor to send a test message to ImmuNet so the ImmuNet team can validate the message.

What standard supplies will I receive with the Covid vaccines to help with administration?
Every time you get additional vaccine doses, you will also receive a shipment with:
- Syringes
- Needles
- Alcohol prep pads
- COVID-19 vaccination record cards for recipients

These supplies will arrive in a separate shipment from the vaccines. There is currently not a way to order more ancillary supplies if you run low.

Where can I administer the vaccine?
You must administer vaccine doses only at the site ordering vaccine.

Can I request fewer than 140 doses of Moderna?
No. The minimum quantity shipped by the manufacturers is 140 doses for Moderna. You may use the vaccine vials over time as patients come into the office and do not need to use all 140 doses within a week (as long as storage follows CDC Storage and Handling Guidelines).

When will I receive vaccine shipments?
Vaccine shipments typically take 2-3 business days to arrive. If you order vaccine on a Friday, expect the vaccine to arrive on Monday or Tuesday.

Note that ancillary supplies will arrive in a separate shipment from vaccine vials.

Vaccine shipments will be made to your practice only during the days/times noted as available delivery times in your ImmuNet PIN profile.

How should I document vaccinations I administer?

All doses should be documented and reported to ImmuNet within 24 hours of administration. This can be done through your EHR or through the CSV reporting method.

I've run out of CDC vaccination cards, how do I order more?
Unfortunately, there is no way to order additional CDC vaccination cards. Please reach out to your Practice Coach and we will aim to provide a PDF of the vaccination cards for you to use. This PDF may *not* be posted anywhere publicly or shared outside of your office.

Do I need to get a signed consent form from my patients prior to vaccinating?
There is no standard consent language for the Covid vaccine, but you should use your usual language for consent for Covid vaccine administration. You should also distribute the FDA EUA Fact Sheet information for the relevant vaccine to your patients, as this document answers common questions and patients can make an informed decision about receiving the vaccine. Here is the link to the Pfizer EUA Fact Sheet, Moderna EUA Fact Sheet, and J&J EUA Fact Sheet.

Additionally, you may use the CDC pre-vaccination screening forms (English and Spanish) to screen patients prior to vaccination. Note that this form does not include a line for signed consent, so you should add your own consent language in addition to these screening forms.

Can I mix vaccine types for a patient? For example, if a patient received Pfizer elsewhere can they get Moderna for their second shot?
See the CDC recommendations for these scenarios here, under "Interchangeability of COVID-19 vaccine products". As stated by the CDC, every effort should be made to ensure completion of the vaccine series with the same product. However, if for exceptional circumstances the patient cannot receive the same product, the CDC advises how to proceed for each individual vaccine type scenario.

The CDC has authorized the use of mixing and matching for COVID-19 booster injections for applicable populations. More information on this recommendation can be found here.

When should I submit a potential adverse event to the Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS)?
Healthcare providers are *encouraged* to report any adverse event they think is medically important or clinically significant, even if they think the event might not be related to the vaccine. However, healthcare providers are *required* to report certain adverse events after COVID-19 vaccines. See this document for 10 Things Healthcare Providers Should Know about VAERS.

Second Dose Questions

Do I need to hold second doses for Moderna patients?
Each ordering provider is responsible for ensuring that you have second doses available. An additional order should be placed prior to you needing second doses, if you do not have enough current inventory to provide second doses. A single shipment can be used for both dose 1 and dose 2 (and doses can be held back), if that is best operationally for your practice.

If a patient got their first dose elsewhere, can we give their second dose at our practice?
In general, aim to have your patients finish their second dose at the same place they received their first dose. Under exceptional circumstances where they cannot get their second dose at the same site, you may give them their second dose. Be sure to verify that you are giving the same vaccine type (i.e. only give them Moderna for their second dose if they got Moderna as their first dose). Note that you may need to use up an allocated first dose for this purpose, and ensure you track that accordingly.

What if my patient can't make it to a second dose appointment exactly 28 days after their first dose?
Aim to give the second dose of Moderna 28 days after the first dose, as prescribed by the EUA. However, under circumstances where a patient cannot get the second dose exactly 28 days following, the second dose may be administered up to 42 days after the first dose, according to the CDC. Second doses should not be given before 28 days.

Are first and second dose vaccines the same?
Yes. The first and second dose vials include the same biochemical makeup and dosing. A single open vial can be used for dose 1 or dose 2.

Third Dose Questions For Immunocompromised Individuals

What immunocompromised populations are eligible for a third dose of the COVID-19 vaccine?
Immunocompromised individuals that obtained Pfizer or Moderna for their initial COVID-19 vaccine doses are eligible for a third dose of that same vaccine. The CDC has a list of defined immunocompromised individuals here, note that this list is not exhaustive.

What is the dosage for third doses?
The third doses should be the same dosage as the first two injections for either Pfizer or Moderna.

Do third doses need to be the same vaccine type as the person's primary vaccine series?
At this time, the CDC recommends that third doses be the same mRNA vaccine as the individual's primary vaccines series.

When should eligible populations obtain a third dose?
Immunocompromised individuals are eligible for a third dose 28 days after completing the second dose.

What should immunocompromised individuals that received the J&J vaccine do?
Immunocompromised individuals that obtained the J&J vaccine are not recommended to obtain a third dose to complete their primary series. However, all individuals, including immunocompromised individuals, that obtained the J&J vaccine are now recommended to obtain a booster dose.

What is the difference between an additional dose and a booster dose?
The additional dose or third dose is only for immunocompromised individuals. This additional dose of an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine is intended to bolster and improve the response for immunocompromised individuals. Booster doses are administered to more broadly defined populations and are targeted to bolster individuals' immunity response once it has waned over time.

Booster Dose Questions

Who is eligible for a booster dose of the COVID-19 vaccine?
Individuals that originally received the Pfizer or Moderna COVID-19 vaccine and are in the following categories are eligible for a booster dose:

- 65 years and older
- Age 18+ who live in long-term care settings
- Age 18+ who have underlying medical conditions
- Age 18+ who work or live in high-risk settings

All individuals that originally received the J&J COVID-19 vaccine are eligible for a booster dose.

What is the dosage for the booster dose?
Pfizer and J&J booster doses are the same as the primary series doses. The Moderna booster dose is a half dose.

Do booster doses need to be the same vaccine type as the person's primary vaccine series?
No, booster doses do not need to be the same vaccine type as the primary vaccine series.

For those that seek Moderna for their booster, but have not previously had Moderna, what should their booster dose be?
All individuals that obtain a Moderna booster should receive a half dose, regardless of what they originally obtained for their primary vaccine injections.

When should eligible populations obtain a booster dose?
Eligible populations that have previously obtained Pfizer or Moderna are eligible for booster doses six months after completing the second dose. Individuals that have previously obtained J&J are eligible for a booster dose two months after obtaining the initial injection.

What are the booster recommendations for individuals that obtained the AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine or another vaccine that has not been authorized for use in the United States?
There are no booster recommendations for individuals that have obtained a COVID-19 vaccine other than Pfizer, Moderna, and J&J. Individuals that are only partially vaccinated by a non-FDA approved or authorized vaccine are eligible to initiate an FDA approved vaccine primary series. The minimum amount of time between a non-FDA approved dose and beginning an FDA approved primary injection or series is 28 days.

Who should I be vaccinating?

Can I vaccinate patients who do not live in Maryland?
In general, you may vaccinate patients who live outside of Maryland. Of course, since Maryland gets vaccine allocations from the federal government in proportion to Maryland's population, most patients

you vaccinate should live in Maryland. But it is generally acceptable to vaccinate patients who live in other states (including VA, DC, and other nearby states as well).

If you have the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine, make sure when you vaccinate patients who live in other states that they will be able to come back to your practice for their second dose appointment.

How can I find out my patients' vaccination status?
You can use the CRISP Vaccine Tracker to view your patients vaccination status and see if they were vaccinated elsewhere. You can use this quick guide to understand how to access and use the Vaccine Tracker.

[MDPCP Practices Only] **The CRISP Vaccine Tracker only shows my MDPCP beneficiaries. How do I add my ENS panel patients to the tracker?**
If you are in the MDPCP vaccine program, your CRISP ENS panel will be added to the Vaccine Tracker, and this will be managed by the MDPCP Program Management Office. The Program Management Office will work with the CRISP team to add your ENS panel by the Monday you receive your first vaccine shipment.

To view both your ENS panel and MDPCP beneficiaries in the tracker, you can select the dropdown at the top of the report and select both checkboxes and then click "Apply":
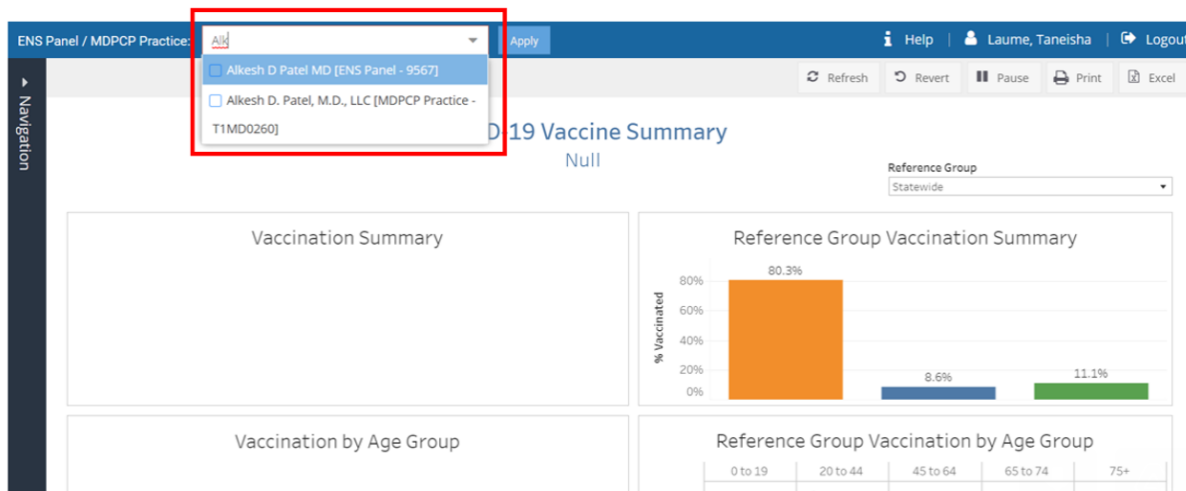
How can I use CRISP's Vaccine Tracker to target my Covid vaccine outreach?
You can filter in CRISP by age, race, and presence of underlying medical conditions to target outreach.

Billing and Coding

Are we able to bill insurance for an administration fee when giving the vaccine?
Yes, you may bill insurance an administration fee. You cannot accept a copay from the patient.

Medicare reimbursement amounts to $40 for a single dose or $80 for two doses ($40 per dose).
- Details from CMS on billing can be found here

- CPT codes for billing can be found [here](#)

How do we collect reimbursement for uninsured or self-pay patients?

To collect reimbursement for uninsured patients, you may submit claims to the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) using the information [here.](#)

- Note that HRSA asks for patient SSN or state identification/driver's license when submitting for reimbursement. If you cannot obtain SSN or other identification for any reason, HRSA also notes that you can attest that you attempted to obtain SSN or other identification but were unable to. See [here](#) for details.

Do all private insurers cover the Covid vaccine administration fee?

The [CARES Act](#) mandates comprehensive coverage of COVID-19 vaccination for most people with private health insurance. This applies to all non-grandfathered major medical plans in both the individual/family market and group (employer-sponsored) market.

Grandfathered Plans

The CARES Act does **not** apply to [grandfathered](#) health plans. These are plans purchased on or before March 23, 2010, and account for roughly 14% of all employer-sponsored health plans in the United States. For these plans, COVID-19 testing is covered with no cost-sharing for the duration of the public health emergency under the Families First Coronavirus Response Act. What may **not** be covered is the cost of the vaccine or its administration. *See question below for how to get reimbursed if you are denied claims from private insurers*.

Private insurers are denying claims I submitted. What can I do?

There is a Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) program called the Coverage Assistance Fund to reimburse Covid vaccine providers for any private insurance plans that have denied coverage for a patient for the Covid vaccine administration fee. See [here](#) for details on how to submit these claims to HRSA for reimbursement. Note that this is a *different* portal from the HRSA reimbursement for uninsured patients.

Can my practice bill private insurance that is not in network for my practice?

Yes, you [may](#) bill private insurance that is out-of-network for your practice.

Where can I find updated CPT codes for third doses and booster doses?

The AMA updates this [Access Tool](#) with COVID-19 vaccine CPT codes regularly.

Other

How can patients view their vaccination records (Covid and otherwise) online?

Patients can view their immunization records online via Maryland MyIR (stands for My Immunization Record). MyIR gets data directly from ImmuNet. You can instruct patients to go to https://md.myir.net/, click "Register Today", and follow the prompts to view their immunization records.
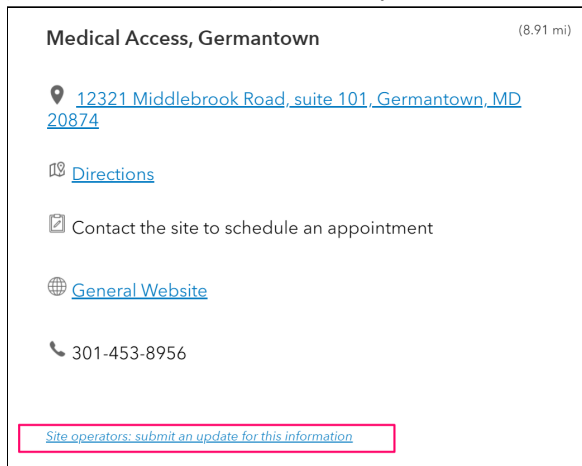
How do I add my practice to the [Maryland Covid-19 Vaccination Sites](#) map public listing?

If you indicated that you want your practice added to the public map and your practice is *not* on the map more than a week later, your practice did not provide enough information for a public listing. Please fill out this [brief form](#) with specific information for the site (ex. Specific phone number for patient scheduling) to be listed. After filling out the form, your practice will be on the website in about a week.

My practice is listed on the [Maryland Covid-19 Vaccination Sites](#) map, but I'd like to update our information. How do I do so?
At the bottom of your listing, there is a link titled "Site operators: submit an update for this information" (see screenshot below). You may click on that link to update your information.

Medical Access, Germantown   (8.91 mi)

📍 [12321 Middlebrook Road, suite 101, Germantown, MD 20874](#)

🗺 [Directions](#)

🗒 Contact the site to schedule an appointment

🌐 [General Website](#)

📞 301-453-8956

[Site operators: submit an update for this information](#)

Validating Practice Immunization Data in ImmuNet

As your practice continues to receive vaccine doses, we need to ensure that all doses administered are successfully recorded in ImmuNet. **Please take some time to regularly take the steps below to compare the total administered doses for your practice in ImmuNet versus your EHR**:

1. View your total administered doses in ImmuNet through CRISP:
   a. Open CRISP Reporting Services: https://reports.crisphealth.org/#dashboard

   b. Select the COVID-19 vaccination reports by selecting "Public Health" then "COVID-19" then "COVID-19 Vaccinations"

   c. Once you are in the Covid-19 reports select the "Doses Administered by Demographics" report (the 6th tab)
   d. Finally, filter the information down to only your practice by selecting your practice from the practice list presented under "Administrating Facility"

Tip: Be sure to uncheck "(all)" , then find your facility from the list.

Dose
(All) ▾

Administering Facility
(All) ▾

Administering Facility System
(All) ▾

Administering Facility Type
(All) ▾

    e.   View your practice's total first and second doses administered in the top left box of the report:

Doses Administered by Demographics

Total First Doses Administered: **693**
Total Second Doses Administered: **179**
Total Single Doses Administered: **183**
Totals above reflect current filter selections

Vaccine data through: **May 6, 2021**

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2. Obtain your total number of administered first and second doses from your EHR or other tracking system
3. Compare the data from ImmuNet (CRISP) and your EHR. If the reported doses are off by more than ~5%, please notify MDH by filling out the variance request for research form here. After filling out the form, an MDH team member will investigate and you will be contacted to resolve any issues.